

INFLATOR

ABSTRACT

An inflator 10 of a vehicle occupant protection system contains an elongated housing 12 having a plurality of gas exit orifices 14 spaced along the length thereof. A first propellant body 31 and a second propellant body 33 are provided in lengths substantially equivalent to the length of the housing 12 wherein the first propellant body 31 is placed in physical contact with the second propellant body 33 for all or most of their respective lengths. Once the first propellant body 31 is ignited upon a crash event, resultant uniform ignition and combustion across the length of the second propellant body 33 results in uniform gas generation and uniform inflation of an airbag 26, wherein the airbag 26 is at least substantially coextensive with and in fluid communication with the housing 12. Preferred mixtures of first propellant body 31 contain silicone, a perchlorate oxidizer, and a nitrate salt.